

IN THE CLAIMS

1-17. (Canceled).

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 20, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 20.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 18, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 25.

20. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of infections in humans or vertebrates ~~comprising~~ consisting of:

administering to humans or vertebrates having an infection caused by an invasion of the blood stream or lymph by a pathogen selected from the group consisting of *Clostridia, Bacteroides, Listeria, Candida* and *Salmonella*, a composition consisting essentially of:

an effective amount of inulin and/or oligofructose to treat said infection;

and

one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients,

wherein the composition is administered orally or through tube feeding.

21-22. (Canceled).

23. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 40 g/day.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 25 g/day.

25-26. (Canceled).

27. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of an infection occupying the lymph or blood in humans or vertebrates ~~comprising~~ consisting of: administering to humans or vertebrates having an infection caused by a pathogen selected from the group consisting of *Clostridia, Bacteroides, Listeria, Candida* and *Salmonella* in the lymph or blood, a composition consisting essentially of: an effective amount of inulin and/or oligofructose to treat said infection; and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients, wherein the composition is administered orally or through tube feeding.

28-29. (Canceled).

30. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 27, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 20.

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 27, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 25.

32. (Canceled).

33. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 40 g/day.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 25 g/day.

35-36. (Canceled).

37. (Currently Amended) A method for the treatment of infections in humans or vertebrates, comprising consisting of:

administering to humans or vertebrates having an infection caused by an invasion of the blood stream or lymph by a pathogen selected from the group consisting of *Clostridia*, *Bacteroides*, *Listeria*, *Candida* and *Salmonella*, a functional food composition consisting of traditional nutrients and an effective amount of inulin and/or oligofructose to treat said infection;

wherein the food composition is administered orally or through tube feeding.

38-40. (Canceled).

41. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the human or vertebrate is a vertebrate and wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 20.

42. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 41, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 25.

43. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein the human or vertebrate is a vertebrate and wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 20.

44. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 43, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 25.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, wherein the human or vertebrate is a vertebrate and wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 20.

46. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 37, wherein the inulin is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 25.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein said composition consists essentially of an effective amount of oligofructose.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27, wherein said composition consists essentially of an effective amount of oligofructose.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, wherein said food composition consists of traditional nutrients and an effective amount of oligofructose.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 37, wherein the human or vertebrate is an adult human and the amount of inulin administered to the adult human ranges from 5 to 40 g/day.